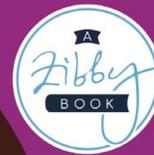


BOOK CLUB KIT

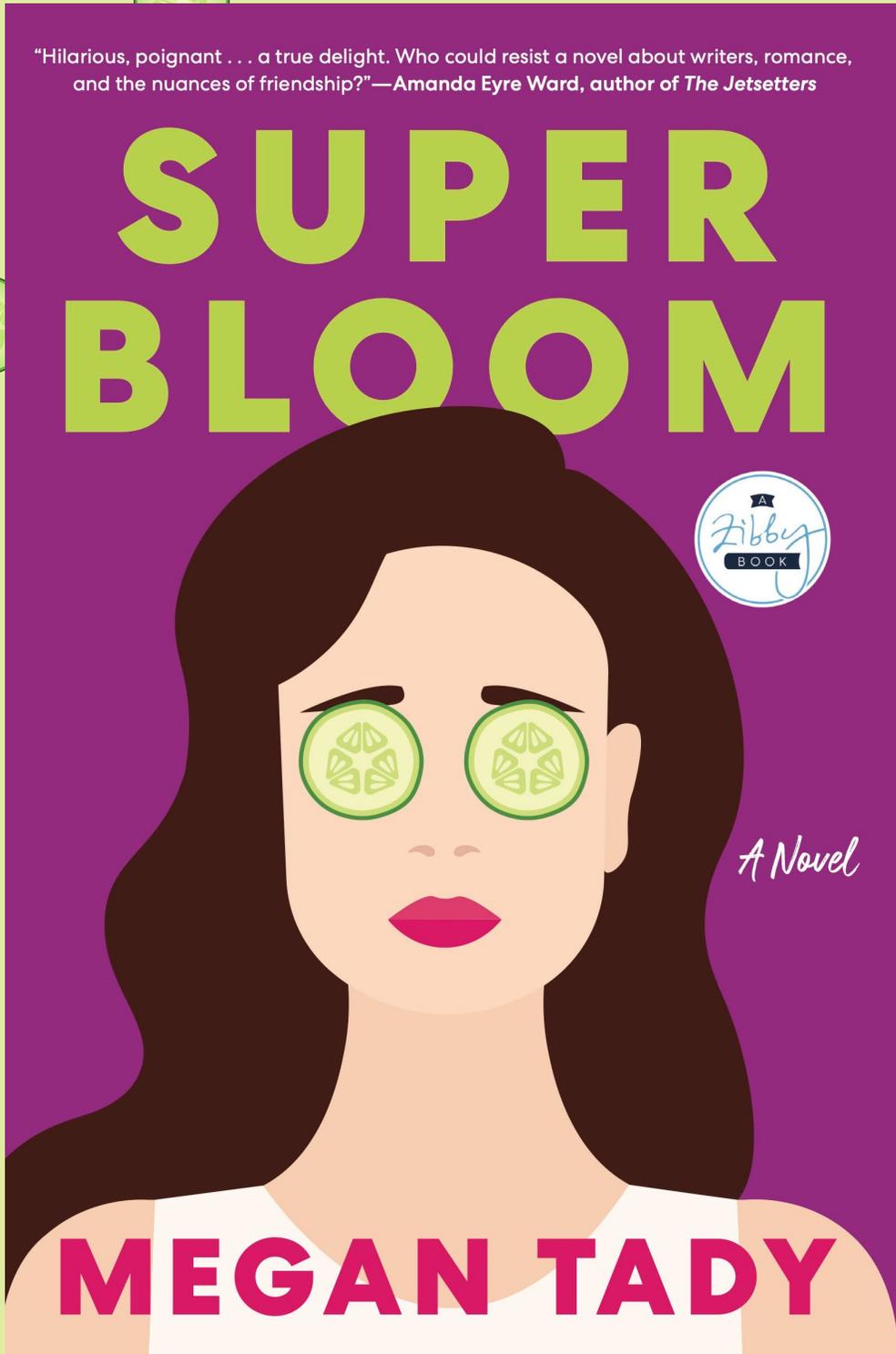
"Hilarious, poignant . . . a true delight. Who could resist a novel about writers, romance, and the nuances of friendship?"—Amanda Eyre Ward, author of *The Jetsetters*

SUPER BLOOM



A Novel

MEGAN TADY





GET READY TO HOST YOUR BOOK CLUB!

We're so glad you've decided to host a *Super Bloom* book gathering! Inside this kit you'll find everything you need for a spa-themed evening: an author Q&A with Meg, a reading guide to help prompt your discussion, a face mask recipe, instructions for massages, and more. Stories are best when shared, and we hope your time together is fun and engaging!

If you're new to hosting a book event, don't worry! We've got you covered. Here's what you'll need to do to get ready for your gathering:

- Determine if you'll meet virtually or in-person.
- Save the date!
- Reach out to your local bookstore. You can direct your guests to purchase the book through the store ahead of time or coordinate with the store and have them sell the books at your event.
- Invite friends! Make sure your guests know they're welcome to attend even if they haven't read or finished the book!
- Plan to have some food and drinks, but don't stress about this! Keep it easy by stopping at Trader Joe's for cheese and crackers. Or go all out with homemade snacks and treats. Grab the ingredients for our spa water recipes or pick up a few bottles of wine. You could also divide and conquer by asking a few close friends to bring an appetizer or dessert!
- Relax and have fun! Book clubs are enjoyable because of the connections, not the cocktails or the charcuterie board. Allow everyone a chance to share or ask questions. Be mindful of those who haven't had a chance to read the book by discussing the themes rather than the specifics.





Q&A WITH MEGAN

1. What inspired you to write a rom-com about an author who writes romance novels?

I wanted Joan to reconnect with her talent and passion for writing. And I saw that writing a romance novel with fictional stand-ins for herself and Samuel was a way that she could both mourn and celebrate her lost love. It also allowed me to offer details about Samuel without getting too bogged down in backstory—his life and passions and interests were transposed onto someone else, someone very much alive. I had space constrictions, so Joan's novel, *Snow Globe*, wasn't able to hit all of the beats of a traditional romance novel, but that's where Joan's editor will come in! I have a lot of respect for the genre and for romance writers, who do offer hope and inspiration in the form of happily-ever-afters.

2. What was your writing process like?

Writing this book took me eight years! I started writing it in fits and spurts, trying to gain my confidence and my knowledge about how to even write and structure a novel. I also work full time as a freelance writer and editor, plus I was the mother of two young children. Add in the pandemic, and the entire pursuit took a long time. I often had to write around the edges of my life, with "Paw Patrol" in the background on the weekends or an hour before my work day began.

3. Your characters are so distinct. Did you have any specific inspiration for certain characters? What about Carmen Bronze?

For each person, I exaggerated specific characteristics—Lou's non-stop chattering; Jamal's obsession with fostering animals—which are all fairly benign, but they became comedic when I turned up the dial. I wanted Joan's spa co-workers to feel like a family of misfits—all people who might annoy you in real life if you worked with them everyday, but also for whom you'd feel deep affection. Speaking of deep affection, I love Carmen Bronze. She allowed me to really push the limits of zaniness, delivering over-the-top lines that wouldn't land if anyone else said them. It was important to me that she also showed humanity, and that she had a believable character arc. By the end of the novel, Joan's friends and parents are metaphorically huddling around her, hugging her, and I wanted Carmen to be in the middle, too, also on the receiving end of that hug.





Q&A WITH MEGAN

4. What books or authors provided inspiration while you were writing *Super Bloom*?

I love books that strike the perfect balance of funny and tender, making me laugh one moment and tear up the next, and I seek out bold fiction that gives me permission to be both silly and smart, irreverent and impassioned. Authors who do this so well include Laura Zigman, Richard Roper, Maria Semple, Kevin Wilson, Emily Henry, Andrew Sean Greer, and Bonnie Garmus.

5. Joan has written a number of journals, all the way back to childhood. Are you someone who journals (or were you)?

Reading my childhood diary always makes me cringe, when major revelations included, “I think purple is my color” and “I’ve decided I don’t like peas.” As I got older, I dabbled with keeping a journal, mostly thinking, “I should keep a journal.” In fact, I have an empty journal next to my bed right now, and I should write in it. I likely won’t. My husband and I do keep a “log book” of sorts, documenting trivial but sweet details about our family life. An entry might read: “Warm for spring. Ramp risotto for dinner. Cat puked. Kids dancing to Prince’s ‘Raspberry Beret.’” It warms my heart to read them.

6. What advice would you give someone who wants to write their own novel? What about someone who wants to start journaling?

I have no advice about journaling (see above), but as for writing a novel: You’ve got to put your bum in your chair and get words on the page, otherwise you’ll only ever talk about writing a novel instead of actually doing it. It’ll be messy and ugly at first, and you’ll probably stumble a lot, but that’s all part of the process. You don’t have to already *be* an incredible writer to write a book; you’ll hone your craft as you write it.

7. Where did you learn about super blooms and why are they important to you?

Similar to Joan, I heard about super blooms from an NPR story on the radio. Listening to the reporter describe a super bloom in California, I raced to my computer and began looking up images. I instantly knew it would be central to my book, and that it would be my book title. I loved the idea that these wildflower seeds could withstand the harshest conditions, waiting for the right moment (heat and rain) to bloom. I think we all have dormant potential inside of us—Joan certainly does. It’s about being brave enough to allow that potential to blossom.





Q&A WITH MEGAN

8. What are some of the books you've been reading recently? Any books you're looking forward to?

I usually read three or four books at a time, placing them around the house so there's always one within reach when I have even five minutes to spare. I also try to read widely across genres so that I can soak up as much writing craft as I can. I'm currently reading Kevin Wilson's *Now is Not the Time to Panic*, *The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris, and the non-fiction book *How to Heal Yourself When No One Else Can* by Amy B. Scher. I'm looking forward to reading Catherine Newman's *We All Want Impossible Things* and Emiko Jean's *Mika in Real Life*.

9. Are you doing more writing? What other projects are coming up for you?

Yes! I'm currently writing my second novel for Zibby Books, slated for publication in 2024. Called *Champions for Breakfast*, it's about estranged mother-daughter skiing champs whose lives go off-piste when an avalanche in a Swiss village forces their reunion. Just like *Super Bloom*, it'll be comedic and tender, with a handful of hilarious side characters.

10. What are some of your favorite rom-coms to watch or rom-com/romance novels to read?

I absolutely loved Amy Schumer's show "Life & Beth" which I consider rom-com-y. It's witty, smart, emotional, irreverent, and touches on important societal issues—plus it was wildly different from anything I had seen in a while. As for rom-com novels, I'll gladly follow Emily Henry into any romance trope, laughing and swooning the entire time.





READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

1. What was your first impression of Joan? What about the other staff at Apex Inn & Spa?

2. Cher and Joan have been friends for a long time, since 7th-grade band class.

Do you remember the first time you met your middle school best friend? What happened? If you're still friends, how has your relationship changed over time?

3. If you were in Joan's position, would you have taken Carmen's offer? What kinds of things could you share about your workplace (or a former workplace) if someone asked you to share some trade secrets?

4. Joan is dealing with a lot of grief at the beginning of *Super Bloom*, so much so that she doesn't want to connect with any of her coworkers.

Why do you think connecting with her coworkers was so hard for Joan? Do you think building those relationships would have helped her move forward after Samuel's death more quickly, or would it not have mattered?

5. When Joan was keeping a journal for Carmen, it activated something in her that had long loved writing.

Have you ever kept a journal? Why did you start, and what has it been like? Share a little about your journey journaling (or why you might want to start).

6. At Apex Inn & Spa's Christmas party, Joan ends up with a gift in the Yankee swap (you might also refer to this as a white elephant or a gift exchange) that reminds her of her relationship with Samuel and helps to inspire Snow Globe.

Have you ever received a gift that unexpectedly meant something or inspired some art? What was that experience like? Do you feel like this moment was a turning point in the story? Why or why not?





READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

7. On page 139, Joan is giving a client a massage when the client has an emotional release. At first, she feels like she doesn't know what to do, but that changes. It also triggers an emotional release in Joan, and she ends up confiding in Lou after the appointment.

Do you feel like this moment was important for Joan's personal growth? Why or why not? How do you think it changed Joan's relationship with Lou? What about her relationship with herself?

8. Both of Joan's parents were very supportive, but it was her father who was constantly urging her to get back to writing. Then later, Joan discovers that a teacher had encouraged her to invest more time in her writing, but she assumed he hadn't thought she was good enough.

Why was Joan's father so supportive of her writing? How do you think Joan's assumption that her teacher wasn't supportive changed whether or not she pursued her dream? How did it change once she knew the truth?

Have you ever had a parent or other adult in your life who was supportive of a dream of yours? How did that change whether or not you pursued that dream?

9. When Joan starts to fall for Tony, she begins opening herself up in all sorts of new ways. Why do you think Joan found Tony so intriguing? After all the time she spent grieving Samuel, what do you think pushed her to begin moving on? What about Joan's relationship with Tony was important for her growth, even when things were tough for them?

10. Joan meeting Quinn sets off a series of events, including Joan joining a book group, becoming friends with Deli, and telling Quinn about her book.

How do all of these moments end up changing Joan's life? How would the story have changed without the supporting cast of characters?

11. In Chapter 31, Cher and Joan have an important conversation, opening up to each other in a way they haven't in a long time.

What do you think got them each to this point? Have you ever had a moment like this with a friend? Did it strengthen or weaken your relationship?





READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

12. For several chapters, Joan is being followed by a white van, which she believes is being driven by Carmen. When she finally confronts the driver, it turns out to be Samuel's mother, Patty.

Who did you think was in the van? Were you surprised by who it turned out to be? How do you think Patty and Joan's conversation healed both of them?

13. After hurting her hand due to writing and working at Apex, Joan begins a downward spiral that gets her kicked out of the grocery store. Her relationship with Tony comes to a screeching halt and ends with her finding Carmen in her house. Ultimately, Carmen gets Joan to admit that she has been writing her own novel and ends up taking the notebook with her.

How did Joan get to this point? Did you think Carmen would find out, or were you sure Joan would get away with it? What did you think about Carmen taking the book with her? Was it justified?

14. After Carmen takes Joan's novel, Cher organizes several of Joan's friends to help her reclaim it. Were you surprised by which of the people in the novel came to support Joan? How do you think this made Joan feel?

15. How did you feel about the epilogue of *Super Bloom*? How does the title and the knowledge Samuel shared with Joan about super blooms parallel Joan's story? Have you ever experienced a super bloom of your own?





MAD LIB

_____ has always thought love is _____ and _____.
FIRST NAME 1 LAST NAME 1 ADJECTIVE 1 ADJECTIVE 2
 After _____ failed relationships and years of being alone, he/she/they
NUMBER 1
 is/are sure that love is not in the cards for her/him/them.

_____ is _____ at her/his/their job as a _____ for _____,
FIRST NAME 1 ADJECTIVE 3 JOB 1 COMPANY 1
 but he/she/they need(s) more _____. After months of promising more
NOUN 1
 _____, her/his/their boss brings in a new _____ for her/him/them—
NOUN 2 JOB 2
 who just happens to be _____, her/his/their rival from
FIRST NAME 2 LAST NAME 2
 _____ and an old flame. _____ is sure they won't work well together
TRAINING OR SCHOOL FIRST NAME 1
 but promises her/his/their boss he/she/they will try as long as _____ will
FIRST NAME 2
 do the same.

It doesn't take long before there is conflict, _____ trying to keep command
FIRST NAME 1
 of the team and _____ trying to bring in new techniques and skills
FIRST NAME 2
 he/she/they learned at other companies like _____. Things get so bad that
COMPANY 1
 the rest of _____'s team begs her/him/them to get rid of _____, but it
FIRST NAME 1 FIRST NAME 2
 isn't up to her/him/them. He/she/they tries/try to reason with _____, but
FIRST NAME 2
 their old rivalry (and the way things ended between them) is rearing its ugly
 head.

When a _____ goes _____, _____ and _____ must
NOUN 2 ADVERB 1 FIRST NAME 1 FIRST NAME 2
 _____ the _____ across _____, finding themselves in _____
VERB 2 (TRANSITIVE) NOUN 1 CITY 1 ADJECTIVE 4
 motels and other _____ situations along the way. When things go
ADJECTIVE 5
 _____, and _____ almost _____, _____ begins
ADVERB 2 FIRST NAME 1 VERB 3 (TRANSITIVE + PLURAL) FIRST NAME 2 FIRST NAME 1
 to _____—was love really waiting for her/him/them all along?
VERB 4 (INTRANSITIVE)





THE ULTIMATE ROM-COM PLAYLIST

A classic rom-com playlist for a true rom-com fan! Every great romantic comedy film has that one special song you can name on cue. How many do you recognize?!

Listen to the songs that make us fall in love with love. It will make you want to read *Super Bloom* by Megan Tady that much more!

Spotify Link

1. Suddenly I See, KT Tunstall (*The Devil Wears Prada*, 2006)
2. Rain On Your Parade, Duffy (*Bride Wars*, 2009)
3. I Will Always Love You, Whitney Houston (*The Bodyguard*, 1992)
4. I Say a Little Prayer, Aretha Franklin (*My Best Friend's Wedding*, 1997)
5. Make Someone Happy, Jimmy Durante (*Sleepless in Seattle*, 1993)
6. Love is All Around, Wet Wet Wet (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*, 1994)
7. Oh, Pretty Woman, Roy Orbison (*Pretty Woman*, 1990)
8. (I've Had) The Time Of My Life, Bill Medley And Jennifer Warnes (*Dirty Dancing*, 1987)
9. Feels Like Home, Chantal Kreviazuk (*How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days*, 2003)
10. My Heart Will Go On, Céline Dion (*Titanic*, 1997)
11. Take My Breath Away, Berlin (*Top Gun*, 1986)
12. Shallow, Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper (*A Star is Born*, 2018)
13. L-O-V-E, Nat King Cole (*The Parent Trap*, 1998)
14. Over The Rainbow, Israel Kamakawiwo'ole (*50 First Dates*, 2004)
15. You Can't Hurry Love - 2016 Remaster, Phil Collins (*Runaway Bride*, 1999)
16. Signed, Sealed, Delivered (I'm Yours), Stevie Wonder (*You've Got Mail*, 1998)
17. Sweet Home Alabama, Lynyrd Skynyrd (*Sweet Home Alabama*, 2002)
18. Wherever You Will Go, The Calling (*Love Actually*, 2003)
19. Don't You Worry 'Bout a Thing, John Legend (*Hitch*, 2005)
20. It Had to Be You (Big Band and Vocals), Harry Connick, Jr. (*When Harry Met Sally*, 1989)





FACE MASK RECIPES

Your next spa-themed book club is the perfect opportunity for a little (and much needed) self-care! Did you know that making your own face mask is SUPER easy? Most require three ingredients or fewer!

Our DIY *Super Bloom* face mask is perfect for an easy, hydrating, and fun way to kick off your next book discussion.



WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

¼ CUP OF PLAIN YOGURT
ONE SLICED AND PEELED CUCUMBER
A BLENDER

Add your cucumber and yogurt into a blender and blend until smooth. Apply the mask to a clean face (just a thin layer!) and leave on for about 15 minutes. Rinse off with cool water and enjoy your newly revitalized, happy skin!

Not a big cucumber fan? No problem! There are plenty of face mask recipes to choose from.

Some other great recipes to feel your best.





FACE MASK RECIPES

Blemish-Fighting Milk Mask

- Mix 2 tablespoons of raw honey with 2 tablespoons of nutmeg and 2 teaspoons of milk until it forms a thin paste.
- Apply to face, leave on for 15 minutes, and rinse off with warm water.

Comforting Chocolate Mask

- Mix 3 tablespoons of unsweetened cocoa powder with 1 tablespoon of cream and 2 teaspoons of raw honey.
- Add ¼ cup of milk and stir into a paste.
- Apply to face, leave on for 10 to 15 minutes and rinse off with warm water.

Hydrating Avocado Mask

- Mix ½ ripe avocado (mashed) with 1 teaspoon of raw honey, and 1 teaspoon of plain full-fat yogurt.
- Apply to face, leave on for 15 minutes and rinse off with warm water.

Talk about books while feeling your best and giving yourself some love!



Ingredient Key:

Not sure what mask is best for you? Let's explore the benefits of each ingredient so you can pick the right mask for your skin!

- Cucumber: hydrates + reduces wrinkles for glowing complexion
- Yogurt: moisturizes + reduces inflammation
- Honey: strong anti-inflammatory properties + promotes healing
- Nutmeg: helps balance oily skin + tightens pores
- Cacao powder: high in flavonoids which protects skin + soothes redness
- Avocado: prevents blemishes + moisturizes
- Milk: boosts elasticity of skin + protects skin with vitamin D





SPA WATER RECIPE

A light, refreshing glass of spa water is the perfect drink for your *Super Bloom*-themed book club!

What you'll need:

- One or two pitchers
- Cups
- Water
- Ice
- Your pick of two or more fresh fruits or vegetables
- And... THAT'S IT!

The *Super Bloom* spa water we recommend uses cucumber, lemon, and mint for a cleansing and delicious refreshment that Joan Johnston would love.

Cut your cucumbers and lemons into slices and add to your pitcher. Fill your pitcher with water, top it with ice and mint leaves, and enjoy! The longer you allow the ingredients to soak, the more flavorful your water will be.

Add as much or as little of the fresh ingredients as you like depending on how strong you want your spa water to be. If you don't like those flavors, make your own mixture!

Some other great combos include:

- Strawberry and lime
- Grapefruit and orange
- Apple, orange, lemon, and mint
- Watermelon, blackberries, and mint leaves
- Rosemary
- Mint and lime

Don't forget to top each cup with more ice and savor your special spa drink while you discuss *Super Bloom*!





HAND MASSAGE

Joan loves massage therapy because of what the body tells her—the stories within the knots of the back and the tension under the skin.

While we can't all find the time for a full body massage every day, we can channel our inner Joan with a simple, relaxing DIY hand massage. It's easier than you think, and once you try it, you will make it a regular part of your day.

Let's get to it!

1. To start, shake out your hands. This will help get the blood flowing.
2. Extend your arms, bend your wrists, and point your fingers up, then down, for 30 seconds at a time. This is a great way to stretch out.
3. Grab some lotion, apply a small amount to your hands, and begin to rub small circles into the bones and joints of your hand.
4. Take hold of one finger, pull up gently, and knead at the base.
5. Knead into the palm of your hand.
6. Explore and experiment: no special technique is needed here. Do what feels best!
7. Channel your inner Joan and listen to what your body is telling you. Stay on a spot that needs a lot of love.
8. Repeat on your other hand!

That's it! Your hands will thank you after all the page turning you did reading your latest book club pick!



WATCH HERE



THANK YOU!

We hope you enjoyed your *Super Bloom* book club! We'd love to see highlights or pictures of your time together. Post on social media and be sure to tag us @zibbybooks for a chance to be featured!

For more *Super Bloom* bonus content, [click here!](#)

